

Lessons From the Old Testament on Worship

(Romans 15:4)

Introduction:

1. In Romans 15:4, the Old Testament Scriptures are mentioned.
2. This verse teaches us that the Old Testament Scriptures:
 - a. *"were written for our learning"*
 - b. serve as a great source of *"hope."*
3. This evening we are applying these principles to "worship."
4. The Old Testament shows how God's people have departed from His plan for worship on many occasions.
5. However, the Old Testament also shows that there is hope for this situation.
6. Our lesson has to do with "lessons from the Old Testament on worship."
7. Let us begin by examining . . .

Discussion:

- I. 3 OCCASIONS WHEN MEN DEPARTED FROM GOD'S PLAN FOR WORSHIP
 - A. (Genesis 4:1-5) Cain departed from God's plan for worship.
 1. Cain and Abel both presented offerings to God.
 2. We know what Cain and Abel did, and we know how God felt about them and their offerings.
 3. Hebrews 11:4 shows that "faith" was the difference between their offerings.
 4. Since faith is based on God's Word (Romans 10:17), we conclude that Abel obeyed God's instructions while Cain did not.
 - B. (Leviticus 10:1-3) Nadab and Abihu violated God's will by offering *"strange fire."*
 1. (Leviticus 9:22-24) God consumed a special offering that was made.
 2. Perhaps Nadab and Abihu did what they did because they got caught up in the excitement of the moment.
 3. Regardless of their motives, they did something God had not authorized.
 4. In offering strange fire, they failed to sanctify and glorify God.
 - C. About 400 BC, the Jews were involved in some sinful practices.
 1. They offered blemished animals to God (Malachi 1:6-8, 12-14).
 2. They also withheld their offerings (Malachi 3:8-10).
 - D. These passages from the Old Testament help us to "learn" that man has been departing from God's plan for worship for a long time.
 - E. Thankfully, the Old Testament Scriptures also provide "hope."
 - F. Let us turn our attention to . . .

- II. 3 OCCASIONS WHEN MEN RETURNED TO GOD'S PLAN FOR WORSHIP
- A. (2 Chronicles 30:1-5) Hezekiah, king of Judah, restored Passover observance.
 - 1. Hezekiah learned how to properly observe Passover from the law.
 - 2. He led the Jews in observing Passover "*as it was written.*"
 - 3. This produced great joy (vs.26).
 - B. Josiah, Hezekiah's great-grandson, did basically the same thing.
 - 1. (2 Chronicles 34:8) Josiah sent some men to repair the temple.
 - 2. (vs. 14-18) A copy of the law was found, and it was read to the king.
 - 3. (vs.31) Josiah made a covenant to follow God's instructions.
 - 4. He led the Jews in observing Passover (2 Chronicles 35:1, 18).
 - C. Years later, after returning from captivity, the Jews observed the feast of tabernacles.
 - 1. (Nehemiah 8:1-8) Ezra and a number of Levites read the law to the people.
 - 2. (vs.14) They read about the feast of tabernacles.
 - 3. (vs.17-18) They followed the instructions given in the law.
 - D. These 3 occasions that we read about in the Old Testament show that hope is available when men depart from God's plan for worship.
 - E. By reading the Scriptures, God's will for worship can be learned.
 - F. Those who follow God's instructions will be blessed.
 - G. The Old Testament teaches us some important fundamentals about "restoring God's plan."

Conclusion:

- 1. God's will for worship today is revealed in the New Testament.
- 2. Regardless of what other people may do, we must always comply with God's will.
- 3. Let us avoid:
 - a. practices that are not based on faith (Cain)
 - b. practices that are not authorized (Nadab and Abihu)
 - c. practices that violate God's will (the Jews in Malachi's day).
- 4. Let us simply follow the Lord's will to the best of our ability (Colossians 3:17).